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# GDI Communicator

The GDI Communicator is an internal newsletter intended to increase communication between management and staff of the Gabriel Dumont Institute of Native Studies and Applied Research

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## GDI Apprenticeship Initiative Update

By James Oloo and Jason DeBack

Gabriel Dumont Institute Apprenticeship Initiative is a key part of workplace training investment by the Government of Canada; GDI and its project partners; as well as industry partners who employ Aboriginal apprentices. The initiative empowers Aboriginal peoples to enter apprenticeship programs and gain employment in the trades sector, and supports both the employer and apprentice through to journeyman status.

GDI offers wage subsidies, job coaching and follow up, and access to the growing Aboriginal labour market. At the end of the project, we will have developed 60 employer partnerships in 17 different trades; at least 120 Aboriginal persons registered in apprenticeship programs; improved service delivery to our clients; and prepared an Aboriginal apprenticeship 'best practices' document.

We have achieved significant milestones thus far. Over 200 employers have been introduced to the initiative and encouraged

to participate. Our first meeting with project partners to review the initiative was held in May 2011. 100% of project partners stated that they were satisfied or very satisfied with the partnership.

To enhance service delivery, in-service sessions for employment counselors (ECs) and program coordinators (PCs) were held at Ile-a-la Crosse, North Battleford, Prince Albert, Regina and Saskatoon in June and July 2011. All participants agreed or strongly agreed that their understanding of the initiative improved as a result of the in-service.

Also, resource materials including *Staff awareness-apprenticeship programs*, and *SPF apprenticeship initiative process and checklist* were prepared for ECs and PCs in May and July respectively. A resource titled *Aboriginal apprenticeship initiative: developing and establishing partnerships* was also prepared for use with external stakeholders.

As of August 2011, 24 clients are working across 18 employer partnerships. Of the 24 apprentices currently working, 14 are in Prince Albert, four in Saskatoon, two each in La Ronge and Meadow Lake, and one each in Ile-a-la Crosse and Regina.

In our quest to reach more employers and potential clients, our "call for apprentices" and 'employers seeking apprentices' ads appeared in the August/September 2011 edition of the *Indigenous Times*, Issue 3/2001 of *Think Big*, and Volume 1 Issue 3 of *Landscape* – the newsletter of the Métis Nation—Saskatchewan. Our articles on GDI apprenticeship initiative recently appeared in *Business View* magazine and will appear in *Canadian School Counselor* and *New Nation* magazines this fall. We are likely to connect more Aboriginal apprentices with employers as the market picks up in the last quarter of 2011. For further information, please contact Jason DeBack at (306) 657-2256 



## Ānskohk Festival


By Lisa Wilson and James Oloo



Mark your calendars and plan to attend the Ānskohk Aboriginal Writers Festival October 19-22 in Saskatoon. The festival is intended to promote the diversity of Aboriginal writers and will appeal to a broad audience. Events include improv by Aboriginal writers and artists, readings and workshops,

a school workshop tour, open mic evening, and a feature presentation by playwright and composer Thompson Highway.

Launched in 2004 to promote and celebrate the work of Aboriginal writers from Saskatchewan and across Canada, the Ānskohk Aboriginal Writers Festival is one of

two literary festival of its kind in the country. It displays the diversity of writing by Aboriginal authors and promotes further understanding of Aboriginal peoples. Full event details can be found at [www.aboriginal.sk.literacy.ca](http://www.aboriginal.sk.literacy.ca) 

## Wage Subsidy Teaches Important Job Skills

By Anna Stene

Steven Sinclair is a local Métis man from Prince Albert. He is currently in the wage subsidy program through Gabriel Dumont Institute Training & Employment. Steven's job placement is at Prince Albert Community Housing Society Inc. as maintenance - caretaker trainee.

Steven was referred to the Gabriel Dumont Institute Training & Employment by the Community Service Centre in Prince Albert. His main duties are preparing vacant units for occupancy which includes cleaning, painting, removal of old cabinets, flooring, bathtubs, fencing etc. As well, Steven helps with lawn maintenance, weed removal, tree trimming and carpentry.

For Steven, reporting to work on time, communicating and working with colleagues, as well as taking directions and learning from Mervin

Gunville, the Prince Albert Community Housing Society Inc. maintenance supervisor, are essential job skills that he is learning. Steven feels the most important things he is learning are working as a team with the other employees and receiving support from staff. Steven was diagnosed with dyslexia in 2003, but has lived with the condition since he was a child. He has struggled to maintain employment due to this disorder.

Prince Albert Community Housing Society, along with Gabriel Dumont Institute Training & Employment, has supported Steven throughout his placement and he feels without the support he would not have succeeded.

What Steven likes best about the placement is

that he learns something new each day. Steven also enjoys working for a Métis organization in Prince Albert.

The Manager, Linda Boyer, who supports the program feels Steven will be a great employee in the future in whatever career he chooses. Prince Albert Community Housing Society is proud to partner with Gabriel Dumont Institute Training & Employment and to continue on with future programs aimed at preparing Métis trainees to develop the necessary working skills required for future employment.

Steven would like to thank the staff at Gabriel Dumont Institute Training & Employment as well as the staff at Prince Albert Community Housing for helping him gain experience within the affordable housing-caretaking field.



## Police Service Summer Program a Big Success

By Alexandra Stang, Prince Albert Daily Herald

The end of summer means the end of a great experience for two young women in Prince Albert.

The Prince Albert Police Service (PAPS) summer student bylaw enforcement has just ended, and Marissa Head and Karmen Gauthier will be going back to school.

"It went really good. Marissa and I ... got lots of compliments," said 19-year Gauthier.

Although the women did not have authority to reprimand individuals or write tickets, their presence in the city's downtown was noticed. The PAPS has received positive comments from the community regarding the increased enforcement.

"Just the visibility of these guys downtown has worked wonders. That's what the downtown merchants (and shoppers) want to see" said Sgt. Kelly McLean. "One business owner even said it's a 300% improvement from last summer," said

Special Const. Tim Maier. "So far, I have yet to hear one negative comment about the program," he added.

Both women completed SIAST's Aboriginal Police Preparation Program and are hoping to one day become police officers. Head will be starting her second year of correctional studies in September, and Gauthier will be entering her first year of the program in January.

Head, 19, cited crime prevention, helping the public, and being a role model as what draws her to police work.

Gauthier got the opportunity with PAPS through a GDI program which is designed to provide Métis students with valuable work experience in their chosen field of study. GDI partners with different agencies in the community to develop a

summer work program for students, said GDI employment counsellor Sherry McLennan. GDI provides a wage subsidy for employers hiring students, she added.

McLean said PAPS is likely to continue the bylaw enforcement summer program in the coming years. These programs are an opportunity for PAPS to provide young people interested in law enforcement with policing experience and allows us to get an inside look at prospective employees, he added. "With the assistance of GDI and our other sponsors like Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority, (and) ... the downtown business improvement, we're really looking to make this a permanent thing," McLean said.

(This article first appeared in the *Prince Albert Daily Herald*, page 3, Saturday August 27, 2011. Reprinted with permission).



Karmen Gauthier and Melissa Head  
(Photo by A. Stang)



## GDI Partners with City for Transit Operator Training

By Lisa Wilson

GDI T&E has partnered with the City of Saskatoon for the delivery of Aboriginal Transit Operator training to prepare individuals for careers as Transit Operators. The training will be delivered by the City of Saskatoon on Tuesday and Thursday evenings over two

months. Application requirements include grade 12/GED, a class 5 driver's license with a safe driving record, acceptable criminal record check, and medical certificate as required for Class 2 Learners License. Applicants are expected to have excellent skills in customer service.

The course will begin in October 2011. Other partners in the program include the Saskatoon Tribal Council and Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technology.

For more information please contact Dwayne Docken at 306-659-1061.



## IT Update

By Gareth Griffiths

### Website

Work on the website continues at pace. News items and new sections are being added all the time. The latest addition is a self-managed section for the Regina Library. See <http://www.gdins.org/reglib.htm>

During the period between August 15<sup>th</sup> and September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2011, the home page received 6,500 hits, making the total hits since launch 39,500. Seven job applications and 12 DTI student applications have also been received in this period. The content for this website will be continually revised, so please check back often for updates.

### Shop

The first phase of implementation is now

complete, and the new shop is live at <https://shop.gdins.org>. Since launch, 26 orders have been placed, 10 of which came automatically through the online shop.

### IT Support System

Support requests continue to be received by the IT Support System. Between August 15<sup>th</sup> and September 15<sup>th</sup>, we have received 63 new requests to the support system. In this period, 71 calls have been closed. We are progressing well with clearing the backlog, and will reintroduce the Service Level Agreements over the coming months.

### Phishing

Phishing attacks is where an email is received asking for personal details such as user names,

passwords, bank details, etc. We usually do not ask for your account details by email (rarely by phone either), as we usually have a facility to reset the password. Please ignore any messages like this, or report them to IT, and we will add the sender to our junk mail filter.

### New Webmail Client

We have begun trialing a new and improved webmail client called Roundcube. This allows drag and dropping of mail between folders, and is much easier and more intuitive to use. Trials will continue for a month, with implementation details to follow in the next issue.



## DTI-SIAST Federation Agreement

By Lisa Wilson

DTI and SIAST have worked through the process of renewing the terms of their Federation Agreement, which expired earlier this year. The five-year agreement has been renewed three times over DTI's near 20-year history.

DTI Director Brett Vandale and SIAST Senior Vice President Academic Davis Walls did a comprehensive review and revision of the terms of the agreement. They updated a number of the terms that are no longer relevant such as references to DTI having offices on

SIAST campuses. One significant change includes an expanded and improved process for dealing with disputes between the two organizations. Clauses outlining options for both mediation and arbitration have now been inserted into the agreement.

In 1991, as the creation of DTI was being pondered, a Ministerial committee recommended to the Saskatchewan Minister of Education that federation of the two institutes be initiated. In 1992, an

agreement in principle between GDI and Saskatchewan Education was reached to formally establish DTI. Between 1992 and 1994 DTI worked to establish the first Federation Agreement with SIAST.

The renewed DTI-SIAST agreement will go to the GDI Board of Governors for approval and must also be approved through SIAST's processes. Brett anticipates a formal signing ceremony will take place late this year or early 2012. 



## New Saskatchewan Advantage Scholarship

By Lisa Wilson

A new scholarship program created by the Government of Saskatchewan will provide \$50,000 in new scholarship funds for Gabriel Dumont Institute students plus another \$50,000 will be matched by private donations, corporate donations, partnerships with eligible agencies, and fundraising activities. The result will be an additional \$100,000 in scholarship awards for Gabriel Dumont Institute students.

Target areas for the scholarship include awards for eligible students in the Saskatchewan Urban Native Teacher Education Program (SUNTEP) as well as to Dumont Technical Institute skills

development programs. Priority areas, as per Gabriel Dumont Institute's strategic plan, include trades, health, education, business, transportation, and other programs that have a direct link to employment.

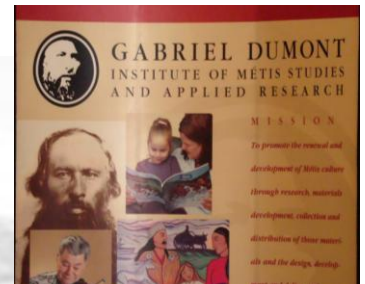
The scholarship awards will strategically target Métis students. Awards will be need-based and/or merit based. Comprehensive criteria will be developed within the next couple of months utilizing such methods as staff engagement and focus groups.

Under the Gabriel Dumont Scholarship Foundation (GDSF), a Selection Committee, made up of the Trustees of the Foundation, currently administers several other

Gabriel Dumont Institute scholarships. All scholarship funds are segregated under the Foundation and the Trust Agreement for the Foundation protects all assets of the GDSF.

Funds from the Saskatchewan Advantage Scholarship program and from matching donations would flow to the incorporated Gabriel Dumont Scholarship Foundation, ensuring the ability to track funds received from both Saskatchewan Advantage Scholarship program and donors.

Keep your eyes peeled for more details and information on this exciting new scholarship program, coming soon!!



## New MCDF Partnership Reached

By Lisa Wilson

Gabriel Dumont Institute and SaskCulture have reached a new agreement for the administration of the Métis Cultural Development Fund. Gabriel Dumont Institute has been contracted to promote and support the Métis Cultural Development Fund (MCDF) to Métis communities across Saskatchewan. GDI's role is to promote the program in a variety of ways and to provide information and advice to applicants.

GDI is also assisting

SaskCulture with the MCDF jury by promoting the SaskCulture call for new juror appointments and assisting in selection of candidates based on the criteria put forward in the call. SaskCulture is moving to a new "jury pool" system for all its programs but the MCDF jury will retain its unique features as a Métis-specific jury with geographic representation (north, south, and central), gender balance, and youth and Elder representation.

Many people will recall that in the past, GDI used

to administer the MCDF and provide reports to SaskCulture and as part of our annual report. In a department-wide move a few years ago, SaskCulture took over control of administration of all its third-party programs, including MCDF. For a time, GDI was not involved in the MCDF program but the new agreement once again engages GDI in this important initiative. The MCDF is the only SaskCulture administered fund that has a partnership like the one with Gabriel Dumont Institute.



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Back issues of this newsletter  
can be obtained at:

[www.metismuseum.ca/brows  
index.php/833](http://www.metismuseum.ca/brows/index.php/833)

We're on the Web!

See us at:  
[www.gdins.org](http://www.gdins.org)



**GABRIEL DUMONT INSTITUTE**  
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#### **GDI Mission:**

*To promote the renewal and the development of Métis culture through research, materials development, collection and the distribution of those materials and the development and delivery of Métis-specific educational programs and services.*



**GABRIEL DUMONT INSTITUTE**  
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